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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Information Radio-Television Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330
Letter No. 2429 Sept. 22, 1989



"USDA TOUCHES YOUR LIFE," USDA Radio-TV's new exhibit, debuted at the Radio Television News Directors Association annual meeting Sept. 13 - 16 in Kansas City, Mo. USDA's Brenda Curtis (with pig), Lynn Wyvill, Vic Powell and Marci Hilt, along with other USDA employees, attended the meeting and staffed the booth. The exhibit will be shown next during NAFB's Trade Talk, also in Kansas City, Nov. 9. (USDA Photo by Diana Morse.)

PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH will nominate Adis Maria Vila to be assistant secretary for administration and Catherine Ann Bertini as assistant secretary for food and consumer services. Vila would succeed John J. Franke, Jr., and Bertini would succeed John Bode. Vila has been secretary of administration for Florida in Tallahassee, Fla., since 1987. Before that, she was director of the Office of Mexico and the Caribbean Basin at the Department of Commerce. Bertini has been an acting assistant secretary at Health and Human Services. She directed the office of family assistance at HHS before that.



FLORIDA'S RADIO NETWORK of Orlando, Fla., has joined the Agri-Business Network. The Agri-Business Network provides radio programming that features agricultural markets, news and weather to over 70 affiliates in Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin and Mississippi. Florida's Radio Network provides more than 30 Florida stations with reports about livestock, grains, citrus, ornamentals, fruits and vegetables. Contact: Pattie Kuhn (317) 848-4404.

FFA MEMBERS TO COMPETE -- FFA members on meat and dairy teams will be competing for national titles at the national FFA meeting in Kansas City, Mo., Nov. 9. State winning teams in meats judging and dairy foods will compete for national titles. Dairy contestants will test ten milk samples for flavor, taste and smell as well as taking an ID quiz on cheese types. Meat contestants will be tested on meat selection, storage, cooking, nutrition and safety. Contact: Ted Amick (703) 360-3600.

USDA SCIENTISTS HAVE IDENTIFIED the mysterious fungus that has kept leaf-eating gypsy moths in check across much of the Northeast this summer. It's an all-but-forgotten Japanese fungus brought to the U.S. in an attempt to control the moth -- 80 years ago. "In 1909, scientists imported two gypsy moth larvae infected with this fungus from Japan for tests," says USDA Microbiologist Richard A. Humber. "Over the next 80 years the fungus adapted beautifully, but no one realized it until now." Contact: Richard A. Humber (607) 255-1276.

IF YOUR OJ TASTES GOOD -- If you worry about whether or not you're getting your daily requirement of vitamin C, you may be able to stop. If the morning six-ounce serving of orange juice tastes good, says USDA Research Chemist Philip E. Shaw, then it has enough vitamin C to meet the U.S. Recommended Daily Allowance. Shaw says flavor loss parallels vitamin C loss in orange juice. Contact: Philip E. Shaw (813) 293-4133.

SMALL SCALE AG -- USDA established an office for small-scale agriculture in 1986 to improve the flow of info about small-scale farming to ag producers and the American public. These farmers comprise a growing segment of American agriculture and the trend is expected to continue as the number of part-time farmers increases. If you'd like a copy of a brochure about "Small-Scale Agriculture," contact: Marci Hilt (202) 447-6445. For info about the office, call Bud Kerr (202) 447-3640.

A QUILLY STUDY -- After catching, weighing and tagging nearly 60 porcupines, a Nevada scientist says there may be more of these animals in Nevada than any where else in the United States. Rick Sweitzer, a range, wildlife and forestry graduate fellow at the University of Nevada, says it's a myth that porcupines "shoot" their quills. He says the barbed quills are easily dislodged if the animal is brushed or touched, especially when it is excited. Contact: Joel Berger (702) 784-4314.

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1685 -- The federal government says the nation's food supply is safe. However, some consumer groups say there are too many herbicides and pesticides being used on the foods we eat. On this edition of AGRICULTURE USA, Brenda Curtis talks with people on both sides of the issue. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 min. documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1167 -- Vegetables vs. cancer; impulse buying; salt & sugar substitutes; biotechnology revolution; children of the farm crisis. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 - 3 min. consumer features.)

AGRITAPE #1674 -- USDA News Highlights; CRP signup; farm population; research on ripening tomatoes; cattle marketing innovations. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE # 1238 -- Gypsy moth fungus is identified; 80 years of adaptation; weather favored fungus; exploiting gypsy moth fungus; breeding blue flowers. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Tues., Oct. 3, weekly weather & crop outlook; Wed., Oct. 4, horticultural exports; Wed., Oct. 11, weekly weather & crop outlook; Thurs., Oct. 12, U.S. crop production, Soviet grain outlook, world supply & demand.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359.
Material changed at 5 p.m. EDT each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

USDA TV NEWS SERVICE -- (Sept. 21, 23 & 25) USDA Economist Verner Grise on tobacco production; USDA Chief Meteorologist Norton Strommen with stormy weather update; Greg Gajewski, USDA economist, on agricultural outlook; Peter Buzzanel, USDA economist, on sugars & sweeteners.

FEATURES: Lynn Wyvill reports on research on infant growth and nutrient intake; Pat O'Leary reports on peanut butter popularity.

NEXT WEEK: Lynn Wyvill reports on the impact of diet on mothers' milk fat and DeBoria Janifer has the story on what's popping with popcorn.

Available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8:

THURSDAY 7:30-7:45 p.m., EDT, Transponder 12D
SATURDAY 10:30-11:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 10D
MONDAY 8:30-9:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 12D
(Repeat of Saturday transmission)

OFF MIKE

WEATHER CONDITIONS ... have been wildly variable this year in the area served by Gary Wulf (KZEN-FM, Central City, Neb.). Wulf says there was no rain for six months, and then six months' worth of rain in six weeks. Weather has had an impact on crops, worst hay yields in memory. Water tables in some areas have dropped 20 feet. Gary says with late and early frosts growing season was only three months long, similar to sections of Alaska.

HARVEST ... in New England region is mixed, says Ed Slusarczyk (Ag Radio Network, Utica, N.Y.), largely due to varying rainfall. Corn in western and northern New York hit by drought, too much rain elsewhere will bring down overall yields. Hay crop protein content reduced in southern sections because of wet weather. Ed says no Alar was used on apples this year and the region's crop is smaller and paler.

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TOBACCO ... market in North Carolina opened two weeks late due to heavy rains, says David Spatola (WNCT, Greenville, N.C.). Crop quality and prices are up. Producers are planting cool season crops such as cabbage and kale.

PIG GATE at RTNDA? RTNDA convention in Kansas City Sept. 13 - 16 was first class. Brenda Curtis, Lynn Wyvill and Marci Hilt accompanied me there. But, someone walked off with "Orson," a toy stuffed pig giveaway at the USDA Radio-TV exhibit. We used the division mascot, an unnamed mechanical piglet that walks, snorts and wiggles its tail, for the giveaway. Susan Kaufman (WEIU-TV, Charleston, Ill.) won the replacement, which we dubbed "Orson II."

BRENDA CURTIS ... will join Hugh Robinson (KKOW, Pittsburg, Kans.) as co-host for morning and noon farm programs Nov. 8. Brenda will be stopping by on her way to attend the National Association of Farm Broadcasters meeting in Kansas City, Nov. 8-12. Come say "Hi" during Trade Talk at the USDA booth.


VIC POWELL
Chief, Radio-TV Division